

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING CABINET MEMBER

REGIONALISATION OF ADOPTION SERVICES

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update and seek an in agreement in principal from the Children, Families and Learning Cabinet Member in relation to the forming of a North and Humber Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) with York as the single host authority.
- 1.2 The report aims to seek an in principle agreement prior to York Cabinet approval that they will be the host of the North and Humber Regional Adoption agency (RAA)

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 An in principle agreement was sought and secured from the Children, Families and Education Cabinet member in Spring 2016 to progress with the development of a North and Humber Regional Adoption Agency. This is in line with the plans to regionalise adoption services across Yorkshire and Humber. At that time the proposal was that within the Yorkshire and Humber region, we would progress an ambitious plan regionally to continue with a central hub and to develop three regional adoption agencies; North and Humber, South and West. North and Humber includes – North Yorkshire/York/East Riding/North and North East Lincolnshire and Hull.
- 2.2 The intention is to transfer and establish North Lincolnshire adoption functions within the context of the proposed RAA. It is a local authority led Regional Adoption Agency on behalf of the six local authorities. It was originally proposed that North Yorkshire and York take the lead.
- 2.3 Development of the three regional RAA's has continued with a proposal that there be one single host authority for the North and Humber RAA. This proposal follows discussions with the DfE and Ofsted where a single host authority was their preferred option. It is proposed therefore that York be that host authority and agreement to that proposal is being sought and secured from York Cabinet members on the 9 February 2017. Once agreement has been secured a robust implementation plan will be developed and progressed via an implementation board following agreement from the other five partner local authorities.

- 2.5 It is therefore imperative that an in principle agreement to progressing with the development of the North and Humber RAA with York being the single host authority is secured from the five partner North and Humber RAA local authorities.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option 1 – to agree in principle with the proposal to develop a North and Humber RAA with York as the host authority.
- 3.2 Regionalisation will have an impact upon the local adoption service, on-costs and central costs. The detail of this will mean a transfer of resource and finance to the RAA.
- 3.4 The plan will bring financial and operational challenges as part of becoming a Regional Adoption Agency. Commitment to the RAA needs to be proportional, based upon trend and projected activity whilst ambitious in terms of outcomes for children and adopters.
- 3.5 Option 2 – To not contribute to the development of the Yorkshire and Humber transitional plan and the development of a North and Humber RAA and give further consideration as to whether we could discharge our function via another route.

4 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 North Lincolnshire will become part of the RAA, the financial, staffing and performance implications will be detailed as part of the transitional process and a further report outlining these provided to cabinet member at a later stage.
- 4.2 There is clear guidance from the Government to form an RAA or discharge functions via an RAA therefore this is a route North Lincolnshire will have to travel either through the transitional phase or at a later stage, both will require the shift in resources and finance.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

There will be financial implications, the detail is still to be worked out and will be reported to the Cabinet Member at a later date.

5.2 Staffing

There will be staffing implications, the detail is still to be worked out and will be reported to the Cabinet Member at a later date.

- 5.2 **IT**
There will be implications for central services, the detail is still to be worked out and will be reported to cabinet member at a later date.

6 OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1 N/A

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1 The regionalisation of adoption is led nationally and informed by key stakeholders, adopters and children. Children, adopters and VAA's are and will be involved in the transitional plan and development of RAAs.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves, in principal, to the forming of a North and Humber Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) with York as the single host authority.
- 8.2 That the Cabinet Member considers a further report when the resources and finance implications are available for consideration and approval.

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Date: 08/02/2017